GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMUNICATIONS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:502
ANSWERED ON:19.07.2017
Internet Speed
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Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the average internet speed across the broadband and wireless connections in the country is poor and erratic as compared to internet speed in other developed and developing countries and if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;

(b) whether the internet speed in rural areas is poor and erratic as compared to the internet speed in urban areas and if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the number of internet users in the country is expected to reach about 500 million by the year end and if so, the details thereof including the number of current internet users in the country, State/UT-wise and Rural area/Urban areawise;

(d) whether the Government proposes to launch next generation communication satellite to provide high quality and high speed internet and mobile service in the country and if so, the details and the status thereof; and

(e) the other steps taken by the Government to improve the internet speed in the country?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE (IC) OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS &
MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS
(SHRI MANOJ SINHA)

(a) As per Akamai's (an international agency) Quarter 1, 2017 report on "The State of Internet", India has a global rank of 89 with an average connection speed of 6.5 Mbps. The global rank was 113 with average internet speed of 3.6 Mbps, as per Akamai's Quarter 2, 2016 report. Internet speed depends on various parameters such as technology deployed, network coverage, number of simultaneous users accessing the internet, connectivity to the website being accessed etc.

(b) Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) monitors average throughput in wireless networks on licensed service area basis. There is no separate information for rural and urban areas.

(c) As per the reports received from TRAI, there were 342.65 Million internet subscribers in the country as on 31.03.2016. The number of internet subscribers has increased to 422.21 million as on 31.03.2017.At this growth rate, country is expected to reach about 500 million internet subscribers by the year end. The License Service Area-wise and urban area / rural area wise details of Internet subscribers as on 31.03.2017 are enclosed as Annexure.

(d) Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has recently launched GSAT-19, a new generation high throughput satellite using high power multiple spot beams in Ka/Ku-band, in June 2017. This satellite can support higher data rate ground terminal for providing internet access and mobile backhaul services to cater to the rural areas of the country. A follow-on satellite, GSAT-11 is planned before first quarter of 2018.

(e) The telecom networks are being upgraded continuously in order to improve the internet speed in the country.

In order to further improve internet/ broadband facilities in rural areas, BharatNet project has been planned to provide 100 Mbps broadband connectivity to all Gram Panchayats (approx. 2.5 lakh) in the country by using an optimal mix of underground fibre, fibre over power lines, radio and satellite media. Under first phase of the project, 1 lakh Gram Panchayats (GPs) are to be connected by laying underground Optical Fibre Cable(OFC) which is under implementation. Under Phase-II, connectivity will be provided to remaining 1.5 lakh GPs in the country using an optimal mix of underground fibre, fibre over power lines, radio and satellite media. Provision of last mile access to the network and broadband service provisioning shall be through Wi-Fi or any other broadband access technologies in all 2,50,000 GPs in the country.

Also, Government has allocated 965 Megahertz spectrum through auction in October 2016 to various telecom service providers for access services. In order to provide high speed internet services in the country, 3G/4G networks are being rolled out progressively by the telecom service providers.